

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-8, 14, 15, and 17-23 are pending.

Claims 9-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,823,145 to Shirai et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,654,393 to Hamasaki et al.

It is noted with appreciation that claims 1-8 are allowed.

Claims 9-13 and 16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 14, 15, and 17 have been amended to reduce their multiple dependency to only claims 1 or 3. Claims 14, 15, and 17 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 18-23 have been appended. The appended claims recite at least the subject matter that is deemed to be allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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